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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 4:20 - הדלקת נרות
- 4:38 - שקיעה
- 9:05 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:41 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:27 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 4:40 - שקיעה
- 5:22 - צאת הכוכבים
- 5:52 - צאת 72

Times Courtesy of MyZmanim.com

When Yaakov died, the brothers feared Yosef might now take his revenge against them. They adjured him to bear their sin and even invoked Yaakov's name asking him to forgive them. Yosef did not take revenge. But did he forgive them?

Rabbeinu Bachya states that one who hurts another is not forgiven until the victim is appeased, even though he has repented. He says that even though Yosef comforted the brothers and tried to assuage their fears, the Torah never specifically says that he forgave them.

In fact, says Rabbeinu Bachya, they died without his forgiveness and because of this the Asara Harugei Malchus, the Ten Martyrs, lost their lives centuries later.

How could Yosef HaTzaddik refuse their pleas for forgiveness?

If we examine his words, we may find the answer. Yosef said, "I am not G-d to take retribution. Though you intended [my sale] for evil, HaShem intended it for good." He comforted them, but his words belied the pain in his heart.

They asked him to forgive their sin, but never acknowledged the pain they had caused him. This recognition of his suffering was necessary for him to heal and ultimately forgive them properly. They did not worry about his pain, but rather only worried about their own guilt. Their approach never allowed Yosef to heal the hurt in his heart, and so he was unable to truly forgive them.

When we wrong another, before we ask for forgiveness, we must acknowledge the damage we caused and allow our victims to become whole again. Only then we will be able to rebuild the bond that we share as brothers.

- Based on "The Short Vort"
By R' Y. Eisenman, Passaic, NJ

Thought of the week:

We judge others by their behavior yet we judge ourselves by our intentions.

”שמעון ולוי אחים כלי חמס מכרתיהם.” (בראשית מטוה)

“Shimon and Levi are brothers, stolen tools are their weapons.”

At the end of his life, Yaakov Avinu wished to address his sons, blessing and guiding them, in order to prepare them to raise future generations of Klal Yisrael. The first three sons, Reuven, Shimon, and Levi, received admonishment. This criticism was necessary for them to improve their characters and can therefore be thought of as a blessing. Yaakov chose to wait until his deathbed, explain the meforshim, lest his sons be driven away in shame and abandon the principles of Torah and service of HaShem he taught them.

In this case, the brotherhood of Shimon and Levi was that they acted as one in destroying the city of Shechem, and in their dislike for Yosef. The Ramban says they were incensed about the taking of Dina because they were her brothers. Ironically, the strong familial connection they had to Dina was not duplicated in their relationship with Yosef.

The “stolen tools” they used, explains Rashi, refers to the craft of murder, which was given to Esav in his blessing (“by your sword shall you live.”) Yaakov was telling them that such behavior was appropriate for Esav, not for the children of Yisrael.

The Ohr HaChaim uses the word ‘achim,’ brothers, to indicate both the above comments. They were brothers in that they thought and acted with a single approach, uncommon in normal brothers, whose ideas are often very far apart. This is why they attacked Shechem together, because they both believed it to be proper.

An alternative approach, he offers, is that the word ‘achim’ comes from ‘cham,’ heat, to teach us that their natures came from the elemental source of fire. Chazal teach that King Shaul committed but one sin yet the kingdom was taken from him while David committed several and the kingship remained with him. This was because Shaul HaMelech had a more passive nature which he failed to overcome, while Dovid HaMelech's fiery nature was generally subdued but occasionally it won out. So too is the case with Shimon and Levi, says the Ohr HaChaim. They were fiery in nature and had to struggle to overcome this. [See *Sipurno ibid.*]

This is why Yaakov did not curse *them*, per se, but rather their anger, this fiery passion which led to the actions of which he disapproved. They were good people, and Yaakov's pointing out that they needed to be watchful lest their hot tempers overtake them was a blessing intended to help them, rather than insult them.

Perhaps this is even alluded to in this posuk. Shimon and Levi found the city of Shechem guilty and killed them out. They found Yosef guilty and wished to kill him. Shimon and Levi had brotherhood. Of all people, they should have been able to put themselves in someone else's place and find room to judge others favorably, thinking how they themselves might act in those situations. Having experienced such unity yet not utilizing it was “stealing” from Esav. This was not who they were in essence, nor is it who we are.

The sons of Yaakov are twelve – yet they are one. We must feel for each other this strong sense of devotion and closeness, defending each other and not, G-d forbid, utilizing the tools of Esav by seeing the negative in our brothers.

R' Chaim Brim z"l was once invited to speak at an event. The preceding speaker at the event referred to his notes as he spoke. R' Chaim, too, referred to his notes as he spoke. When he finished speaking and left the podium, he forgot to take his notes with him.

When the event was over, someone straightened up the room and found the notes which R' Chaim had left at the podium. To his puzzlement, he saw that the “notes” was a blank piece of paper. After a few minutes of thought, he realized what had occurred. R' Chaim was known for his exquisite sensitivity to others. When he had observed that the first speaker referred to notes as he spoke, he feared that he might embarrass the man if he then spoke without notes. Therefore, he decided to refer to his “notes” as he spoke as well.

- Source: Revach.net